

Exploring the Impact of Task Party: Participatory Art Activities on Classroom Engagement and Artistic Imagination Development in Higher Education Students



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Student classroom participation has been identified as one of the most crucial predictors of learning and performance in higher education. Correspondingly, students' self-efficacy and the teaching environment have been confirmed to have significant impacts on student participation (Rocca, 2021). A rich participatory classroom experience is characterized primarily by dialogue exchanges, critical reflection, and students' engagement with course materials and content. In an inclusive classroom, individuals from diverse backgrounds and statuses can freely engage in democratic dialogues. In this context, Task Party, as a form of socially engaged art, facilitates participants' ability to swiftly integrate into the classroom environment of art education. Oliver Herring (2011) conceptualizes Task Party as an open-ended and participatory structure that provides nearly limitless opportunities for a collective engagement among individuals and their surroundings (Gillespie, 2016).

The purpose of this study is to explore the potential impact of diverse tasks within Task Party on the level of student engagement within the classroom setting, drawing upon the importance of social art participation in higher art education. Seven graduate students enrolled in the "Community, Culture, and Art Education" course at the University of Arizona collaborated with Professor Kate Collins to achieve this aim. On November 7, 2023, they collectively organized and implemented a socially engaged activity — Task Party — attracting 22 participants, all students from the University of Arizona. Specifically, this study scrutinizes how distinct activities, objectives, and tools utilized in each task contribute to modulating student participation and learning. Concurrently, this research emphasizes the importance of examining how participatory art stimulates students' artistic imaginations.

Biography:

Gillespie, J. (2016). Oliver Herring's TASK in the Classroom: A case for process, play, and possibility. *Art Education*, 69(1), 31-37. Rocca, K. A. (2010). Student participation in the college classroom: An extended multidisciplinary literature review. *Communication education*, 59(2), 185-213.